

SCORP 2000 – 2004

A New Millennium, A New Tradition

Strategic outdoor recreation plan for the beginning of the 21st century

Plan Vision Statement:

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan examines Indiana's recreation resources for the social, physical and economic benefit of its citizens through evaluation of the status of outdoor recreation in Indiana.

We envision it to be used as an information resource; promoting research, cooperation, and partnerships for effective guidance and planning in recreation decision making.

The Plan Advisory Committee



SCORP 2000

Goals of SCORP

- *Qualify Indiana for Land and Water Conservation Funds*
- *Establish outdoor recreation funding priorities, including those for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Hometown Indiana, Recreational Trails Program, Indiana Waters, and any existing and/or future moneys available through the state budget process*
- *Help improve the provision of outdoor recreation to in-state and out-of-state users*
- *Conduct an investigation of recreation supply and demand*
- *Establish benchmarks*
- *Identify and explore costs and benefits of outdoor recreation activities, and include models where possible*
- *Evaluate past plans*
- *Identify and promote appropriate roles for public and private sector providers (coordination of “who does what”)*

2000-2004 SCORP Goals established by the Plan Advisory Committee,
March 7, 1997

A New Tradition

Indiana has a long tradition of earnest, comprehensive planning for outdoor recreation. All through the latter half of the 20th century, Indiana has been recognized as a national leader in statewide planning for quality opportunities for its citizens. The dawn of the 21st century offers a unique opportunity to shape the future of generations to come by building upon the accomplishments of the past. With new technologies and methods, Indiana has developed a new tradition. The *SCORP 2000 – 2004 A New Millennium, A New Tradition*, is just the beginning. That is, it strives to acknowledge the accomplishments of the past while incorporating the advancements of new technologies in using, protecting, and conserving Indiana's natural and recreational resources.

This plan has been developed to show Indiana citizens, decision makers, outdoor recreation providers, user groups and interest groups what actions are necessary to address the outdoor recreation and conservation issues and needs, faced by Indiana in the 21st century. The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) will be used as a guide to direct the allocation of Indiana's share of the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund.

A new and exciting component in the SCORP is the inclusion of the DNR Resource Manual and the Environmental Yellow Pages at the end of the document. The DNR Resource Manual provides a comprehensive overview of the funding and technical assistance offered by the various divisions within the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. The Environmental Yellow Pages is a comprehensive section that includes contact addresses, phone numbers and website addresses for governmental and private organizations throughout Indiana. These additions are valuable resources for both recreation providers and users alike.

The Indiana State Trails Plan is included as a document in the Appendix of the 2000 – 2004 SCORP. The Trails Plan is a user-conceived document intended to further the development of trails in Indiana. These two plans, the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and the Trails Plan complement each other. The State plan provides direction for governmental agencies, while the Trails Plan addresses goals and objectives that can be accomplished on the grassroots level by many different groups across the state.

Another new tradition is the way that the Indiana SCORP 2000 – 2004 will be distributed and made available to the public. The document will be printed and available in hard copy form to be sure. However, this will be the first SCORP to be completely available on-line and in a downloadable format. In addition, both the SCORP and the regional recreation supply and demand analyses will be made available in compact disk format. The databases that are used to develop the information presented in the SCORP will also be available to the public through the Internet.



SCORP 2000

While the types of information contained in this SCORP are not new, the presentation of the information is new. The main document contains an overview of the supply of and demand for outdoor recreation within its pages. There will also be companion documents available that address the supply and demand specific to each planning region in Indiana. This information can provide recreation providers with valuable insights into their individual communities. Each region will also include an assessment of the supply of outdoor recreation facilities and resources. This will be expressed in terms of how the region compares to quantitative standards for recreation facilities. While not a new tradition, it is one that has not been used in quite some time, and re-instituting the standards approach can help to justify the provision and expansion of outdoor recreational opportunities.

The facilities inventory and the statewide trails inventory are housed as a geographical information system that allows for in-depth analysis and mapping. These databases are also available online for use by the public. When combined with the participation survey, a snapshot of the level of recreational services and opportunities becomes evident. A powerful analysis tool emerges, that, if continued, will revolutionize the way we look at environmental and recreational resources in the future.

Role of the Public

Public participation is an essential component of a credible, quality plan. The role of the public should never be underestimated or undervalued and therefore, plays a large role in both the development and utility of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Ultimately, it is the public who benefits from recreation planning. Developing a solid plan is the foundation for improving the quality and availability of recreation opportunities. The SCORP is a valuable resource to recreation providers, who use this information to help improve the quality of communities. Because all of this is designed to benefit the public, it is critical to involve the public throughout the planning process.

The public was instrumental in developing the SCORP through four different channels: the Plan Advisory Committee (PAC), Indiana's Trails Advisory Board (TAB), a variety of surveys, and several public meetings. All of these methods were used to involve the public, obtain input, and generate comments.

The Plan Advisory Committee (PAC) is made up of 33 people representing various interests from across the state. Members include park and recreation professionals, educators, private consultants, planners, outdoor recreation users, and staff from other IDNR divisions. All are people who expressed an interest in being a part of the planning team, and who were willing to make a very large investment of time and energy to see the plan through to its completion. The PAC held regular meetings, generated ideas for inclusion in the SCORP, served as a sounding board, and acted as the premier advisor on the development of the plan.

The Trails Advisory Board (TAB) is made up of 14 citizen volunteers that represent a variety of trail interests, including pedestrians, bicyclists, off-road vehicle users, water trail users, environmental groups, soil and water conservation districts, park and recreation agencies, and users with disabilities just to name a few. The TAB is the IDNR's advisor on trail issues and continues to be the key player in the development of the trail specific materials.

While both the PAC and TAB were very important components of public input, they were only a small portion of the total input sought. Several surveys were conducted at the request of the Division of Outdoor Recreation, which were designed to gather recreation information from across the state. Surveys covered topics such as supply and demand, recreation participation, issue importance, and trail specific information. The data collected from these surveys provides insight into the status of recreation.

In addition to the survey work, the document went through a 30-day review period during which comments were solicited from the public. Additionally, comments were obtained from a series of public meetings where the draft document was presented and discussed. Where possible, comments were addressed in the final printing of the plan. A listing of the public input received on this plan is available by contacting the Division of Outdoor Recreation.



SCORP 2000

Recreation Benefits - Something for Everyone

“The benefits of recreation are endless!” has been the battle cry for recreation providers through the latter half of the 20th century. As the new millennium dawns, this cry is becoming a roar that resounds throughout Indiana. Outdoor recreation opportunities offer benefits that reach far beyond a simple walk in the woods. Nearly everyone in society is affected one way or another by the benefits that outdoor recreation can provide. They permeate the workforce, the communities that we live in, the schools, the economy, the environment, and the home. Outdoor recreation activity benefits the individual mentally, physically and spiritually. When quality outdoor recreation opportunities are available and accessible, everyone benefits.

Nearly every Hoosier can benefit from outdoor recreation. Exercise can enhance concentration and improves academic performance. People who are actively engaged in outdoor activities tend to have better health and quality of life in their later years. In fact, many studies indicate that people who exercise regularly on average live longer than their sedentary counterparts. Another benefit of outdoor recreation for the individual is the immediate reduction of stress they experience when they recreate outside. Less stress allows people to maintain a stronger sense of balance between work and play leading to increased happiness and productivity. Most importantly, children also benefit. Outdoor activity builds strong bones and muscles while increasing self-esteem, independence, and confidence. When a child learns to turn to the out of doors for recreation and relaxation, they learn life style skills that will sustain them throughout their life.

Communities become safer. Adult and juvenile crime can be reduced when there are ample recreation opportunities present in a community. It costs far less money to provide outdoor recreation opportunities than it does to provide correction facilities. In general, outdoor recreation can provide individuals with the opportunity to expel energy and emotion not being released in other aspects of their lives. When individuals benefit from outdoor recreation, communities benefit. Quality recreation facilities and programs give a community a sense of pride, while building a sense of cohesion and connection. It can provide opportunities for families to connect with each other and with those around them. This allows a community to grow stronger. Many communities use this strength of family values to attract new growth and revitalization.

Recreation opportunities also benefit the economy. Property values increase when there are ample outdoor leisure opportunities available. Outdoor recreation activities contribute to a healthier population that decreases health care and insurance costs. The work force is more productive and employee absenteeism is lower among those who use their leisure time actively. Many corporations, large and small, consider the quality of the parks and recreation programs when choosing new sites to locate their businesses. In the competition for industry, that trail connecting the schools to the city park and the surrounding suburb might just be the factor that tips the scales when attracting new businesses.

Outdoor recreation can produce an economic benefit simply by providing an attraction for tourism. In many places outdoor recreation opportunities have created a boon to the local economies by attracting tourist and the dollars they spend. In Indiana, tourism is an emerging industry and much of this is directly connected to the outdoor recreation opportunities that abound.

Outdoor recreation benefits the environment. When people spend more time outdoors their awareness of the environment is heightened. They begin to demand accessible places to enjoy nature. Open spaces suddenly have great value in the community. It becomes a precious commodity that is guarded vigilantly. Access to green and open spaces serves as a catalyst for a whole chain reaction that benefits the environment. As people recreate in the out of doors, they become more interested in the quality of the air, the water and the soil. People become more curious and seek to gain more knowledge about their surroundings. This knowledge helps to motivate people to preserve and protect plants, habitat, and wildlife resources. Conservation and wisely using natural resources is becoming a priority for society in Indiana. Together, we are building a society where it is everyone's right to enjoy the benefits from outdoor recreation.